DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 116 840 RC 008 910

AUTHOR Sorensen, Donald M.
TITLE A Perspective on Title V Rural Development Programs in the Western States. WRDC Special Report No. 2.
INSTITUTION Western Rural Development Center, Corvallis, Oreg.
SPONS AGENCY Rural Development Service (DOA), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Dec 75
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Conservation (Environment); Delivery Systems; *Demonstration Projects; Employment; Health; Housing; *Income; *Interagency Coordination; Land Use; Program Descriptions; Research Projects; *Rural Development; *Social Services; Synthesis
IDENTIFIERS *Rural Development Act 1972 Title V; United States (West)

ABSTRACT

Based on the available documentation of Title V (Rural Development Act of 1972) rural development programs currently underway in the Western Region (13 states), this report summarizes project endeavors to: (1) improve income and employment; (2) enrich environmental quality; (3) enhance social and health amenities; and (4) improve the quality of government processes and services. Providing a regional perspective, this summary also identifies Title V beneficiaries, benefit types, and problem areas (economic development, manpower development, public policy, comprehensive planning, and environment). The following are cited as significant dimensions of the Western Region's current rural development work: (1) Title V projects are addressing problems faced by all people living in rural areas-not just the agricultural producer; (2) Title V programs reflect locally elected officials' increasing recognition of needs and requests for assistance; and (3) Title V projects demonstrate that effective integration of research and extension activities can result in innovative and creative approaches to problems of rural development. Among some of the specific projects mentioned are: Utah's socioeconomic analysis project; Colorado's environmental research; Washington's efforts to facilitate government interaction; and Nevada's efforts to develop a data base for community decision makers. (JC)

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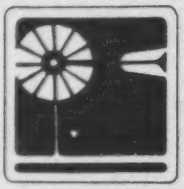

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A Perspective on Title V Rural Development Programs in the Western States

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by

Donald M. Sorensen

WRDC Special Report No. 2
December, 1975

A Regional Center for Applied Social Science Research and Community Resource Development Cooperating with Land Grant Universities in:

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming;

and located at
Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon

RC008910

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is based upon available documentation of Title V rural development programs underway in the thirteen western states. Title V programs of the individual states and the Western Rural Development Center are supported through Public Law 92-419, the Rural Development Act of 1972.

Donald M. Sorensen is acting assistant director of the Western Rural Development Center and associate professor of agricultural economics, Oregon State University.

The author wishes to express appreciation to Jan Newton and Mike Adams of the Western Rural Development Center and to Howard Tankersley, Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, for reviewing this report and offering suggestions. The author is, of course, responsible for any errors or omissions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 2

Table 1. 4

II. INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT 5

III. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY 7

IV. SOCIAL AND HEALTH AMENITIES 9

V. QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT PROCESSES AND SERVICES 10

VI. CONCLUSION 13

A PERSPECTIVE ON TITLE V RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE WESTERN STATES

by Donald M. Sorensen

The 13 state land grant universities of the region served by the Western Rural Development Center have implemented programs under Title V of the Rural Development Act of 1972. All projects are aimed at carrying out the expressed intent of the Congress "to encourage and foster a balanced national development...by providing the essential knowledge necessary for successful programs of rural development."[1] In the 13 western states, more than two dozen projects have been undertaken which serve selected local communities in 29 counties. Two statewide projects have been undertaken in support of substate regional economic development efforts. These joint research-extension projects are directed at needs of rural America which the Rural Development Act was designed to address--income and employment, environmental quality, the provision of social and health amenities, and the quality of government processes and services. Assistance provided communities in these projects enhances the capacity of the local community to meet its own needs without having to rely upon federal financing or provision of services and facilities. Documentation of the less than two years efforts under Title V indicates that substantial progress is being achieved. The final impacts from these efforts promise to be very substantial.

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[1] Section 501, Title V--Rural Development and Small Farms Research and Education. Rural Development Act of 1972, Public Law 92-419, 92nd Congress H.R. 12931, August 30, 1972.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a regional perspective on Title V projects underway in the western states, including identification of beneficiaries, types of benefits received, and the nature of research-extension integration for addressing rural development needs.

A general review of state projects reveals three important dimensions of rural development work being done in the Western Region through Title V program efforts. First, rural development projects address problems faced by all people living in rural areas--not just the agricultural producer. The economic and social problems of low income groups, ethnic minorities, small town businessmen, locally elected officials, and planning bodies are among those attended to through combined research-extension efforts. It appears that Title V enhances and encourages the responsiveness of land grant universities in dealing with the problems facing the total human community in western rural America.

Secondly, Title V programs reflect locally elected officials' increasing recognition of needs and requests for assistance. Not only do these public decision makers articulate needs related to the provision of public services and land use planning, they express a need for leadership and organizational development assistance which is essential for effectively dealing with these problems. Title V programs provide significant and immediate response to these part-time elected officials and to the volunteer citizen planning organizations who do not have abundant professional and financial resources at their disposal.

Thirdly, Title V projects demonstrate that effective integration of research and extension activities can result in innovative and creative

approaches to problems of rural development. Research and extension professionals provide assistance to communities coping with problems that community groups identify. These professionals demonstrate an increasing awareness that community development is a continuing process in which community residents identify problems, seek alternative solutions, select among alternatives, and implement solutions they choose. Professionals sensitive to this process responsibly involve local citizens in the diagnosis of problems and the creation of solutions. They strive to facilitate community development processes by assuring that relevant persons in the community are communicating effectively and that documentation of community efforts is achieved. Community development professionals assist communities by working with them in generating and sharing information, in providing technical assistance, in developing organizational capability, and in strengthening leadership ability of local people.

A more detailed analysis of efforts underway through the auspices of Title V programming reveals a broad range of projects designed to address the rural West's needs. Projects are aimed at improving income and employment, enriching environmental quality, enhancing social and health amenities, and improving quality of governing processes and services. The following review examines projects falling within these four general areas of need. Specific attention is focused upon those persons and rural institutions receiving direct benefit, the kinds of benefits being received and the nature of research and extension integration in Title V programming. The following summary table and narrative relates the kinds of impacts these types of projects have had to date.

TABLE 1. General Summary of Problems Addressed, Beneficiaries, and Nature of Benefits Received from Title V Programs in the 13 Western States

Problem Areas	States	Nature of Benefits	Beneficiaries
Economic Development	Alaska	Identification of resource constraints	Native villagers
	Arizona	Community ability to analyze potentials	Local leadership
	California	Improved coop management and technical competence	Low income farmer-owned coops
	Montana	Safflower improvement for alternative crop	Crop farmers/oil processors
	Utah	Area understanding of retail market structure	Area businessmen
	Idaho	Knowledge of small farm/town interdependencies	Farmers and businessmen
Manpower Development	Hawaii	Assessment of alternative employment opportunities	Unemployed pineapple workers
	Utah	Documentation of manpower needs and resources	Manpower training interests
	Oregon	Grant proposal aid for EDA work program	Unemployed workers
Public Policy	Arizona	Assessment of transportation policy needs	Rural businessmen/consumers
Comprehensive Planning	Montana	Help COG - 18 county planning relationships	Elected officials
	Nevada	Understanding data use in decision making	Town and county officials
	New Mexico	Local government structure determination	Unincorporated townspeople
	Oregon	Data on economic interrelationships	County planners
	Utah	Planning for energy development impacts	Area elected officials
	Washington	Government, university, local agency cooperation	Local government units
	Wyoming	Improved regional planning mechanisms	Elected officials
Community Facilities	Colorado	Understanding of low income housing alternatives	Local elected officials
	Oregon	Ability to decide county hospital issue	Local health group
	Utah	Area health service planning capability	Local health groups
	New Mexico	Improved rural housing, health, water and sewer facilities	Residents of 3 communities
Environment	Colorado	Analysis of groundwater recharge project	Water district members
	Oregon	Determining solid waste solution	Elected officials
	Utah	Analysis of alternative water uses	Elected officials
	Wyoming	Planning energy resource development	Regional planning officials

Income and Employment

Ten of the 13 western states are engaged in efforts which bear directly upon rural income and employment. Individual projects range from county or area wide economic base and input/output analysis to work with low income ethnic minority farmers and their cooperative organizations. The seven states involved with socio-economic analysis are using their findings as a basis for increased understanding of local socio-economic interrelationships and to implement programs by individuals, local businessmen and local government officials.

For example, concentrated effort in the Unitah Basin of eastern Utah is designed to assist local residents, government decision makers and the energy development group understand likely impacts of energy resource development upon the area and to plan appropriate action to accommodate impending changes. These beneficiaries, many of whom are currently involved in the research themselves, are developing knowledge of socio-economic factors in regard to water use transfers, needed institutional accommodations to change, land use changes and manpower needs and resources of the area. The anticipation of manpower requirements in energy resource development and related industries helps employers and public decision makers plan training programs, creating a labor force that can capitalize on emerging employment opportunities.

Utah State University is integrating its research and extension functions at the local level in three specific ways. First, part of their effort is integrated in a single professional responsible for both research and extension work. Second, teams comprised of research and extension professionals are working on other dimensions of the program. Thirdly, an inter-agency

task force comprised of the local Rural Development Committee is currently evaluating potential projects and will focus their attention and resources on one or two high priority development efforts.

There are other examples of socio-economic analysis which serve as a basis for Title V development activities, for example, Idaho's efforts to help small town businessmen, local government entities and state and federal government agencies understand the interrelationships between small farms and small towns. In Oregon there are attempts to strengthen economic planning for a county with unemployment in excess of 25%. In Wyoming, local citizens, local, state, and national government entities are developing the capability to plan effectively for the development of energy resources in the Big Horn Basin. As in the Utah example, these states are involving local residents in program development and the research and extension efforts are integrated at the local level.

Arizona Title V program efforts to foster income and employment growth opportunities in rural areas are centered around industrial development and transportation issues. The industrial development emphasis helps local businessmen and local government officials develop the ability to analyze the place of industrial development in the community and to develop among them skills to attract industry to the community. A ten week correspondence course followed by a three day workshop was held for 40 leaders from throughout the state. These participants worked with Title V staff in conducting four follow-up regional workshops so that an additional 300 businessmen, Reservation Indian leaders and local public officials could have the opportunity to develop capabilities essential for stimulating economic growth and development of their communities.

The Arizona transportation project documents the problems that local community businessmen face in shipping goods into and out of their communities. In-depth analysis of rural transportation conditions reveals severe problems of routing, time loss, energy, and high costs of transport. Documentation of the causes of transportation problems is expected to strengthen community, state, and federal efforts to minimize the adverse situation confronting rural areas of the state. The Arizona Title V program places both research and extension components under the coordination of the state extension community development leader.

One further example of direct assistance intended to increase income and employment growth is the California program for low income, farmer owned production and marketing cooperatives and their sponsoring agencies. Thirty-nine cooperative groups comprised largely of Spanish speaking and Indian farmer-producers are receiving broad education and training in production technology, marketing, business management, and community organizational procedures. The challenge is to make this information relevant to the low-income community which often is unable to gain effective access to needed assistance. The strength of the program rests upon successful integration of efforts of the University, sponsoring agencies and the cooperatives themselves. Project personnel responsible for both research and extension functions work closely with local community colleges, the state manpower planning office and the California Rural Affairs Council.

Environmental Quality

Land use is a principal concern addressed in both the Wyoming and Utah programs. Local government and planning officials are provided the information and organizational assistance for addressing land use issues in their

respective jurisdictions. Energy resource development will impact dramatically on land use in those areas of both states where Title V efforts are concentrated. Both states are utilizing a team approach to carry out research and extension functions.

A major effort in Colorado is being made to provide assistance to the Frenchman Creek Ecological Association. This group is made up of local citizens, their elected officials, and federal and state agency personnel concerned with the potential for recharge of the Ogallala Aquifer in northeastern Colorado. Fearful of declining water tables due to the recent development of irrigation, the Association is seeking information on the feasibility of impounding water in pits, dams, and terraces in the two county Frenchman Creek drainage system. Research currently in progress will provide data concerning the feasibility of recharging the Acquifer. Related questions being addressed include 1) effects of the dams, pits and terraces on the total ecology of the area, 2) impact of successful recharge upon downstream water supplies, 3) location of water impoundments to maximize groundwater recharge and 4) impact of water holding areas upon wildlife habitat. The Association, closely involved with project researchers, will work out responses to these questions as they strive to carry through on their commitment to ecological conservation. This project affords potential benefits for current residents of the area and for those people struggling with similar questions throughout the entire Great Plains area. It will also be of benefit to those succeeding generations who will depend upon the land and water resources of the area for their livelihood. The research and extension functions are performed through a team effort involving the Title V coordinator, University researchers and local residents.

Social and Health Amenities

In the Western Region, primary emphasis in the area of social and health amenities centers around rural health service delivery and rural housing. Colorado, Oregon and Utah Title V programs contain specific projects on health services, while Colorado and New Mexico are directly involved in rural housing projects.

The Oregon rural health project provides a dramatic illustration of the effectiveness of Title V program efforts in developing an information thrust to help a rural county make decisions about its medical facilities' needs. The precipitating event was a county wide referendum on renovation and expansion of the hospital. Title V project personnel, working closely with state and local groups, developed data on both financial and health aspects of the hospital question. Through the use of various media, this information was brought to the attention of citizens throughout Tillamook County. When the votes were in, 42% of the eligible voters had gone to the polls to pass a bond issue by a 6.5 to 1 majority--this in a county where unemployment exceeds 25%. This effort demonstrates that local citizens, when provided factual information, will make responsible and constructive decisions and carry out actions for meeting local needs as they define them. The beneficiaries include all residents of the county and, most specifically, those local leaders responsible for upgrading county health facilities. The research and extension functions in this project were carried out by the Title V person living and working in the local community.

The Colorado rural housing project provides technical assistance to and documentation of the Morgan County FmHA Self-Help Housing experience. The Title V staff is preparing information on the Morgan County

experience for presentation to local officials and citizens who are struggling with problems of providing low and moderate income housing. The Title V staff are cooperating with the Colorado Rural Housing Development Corporation in this project. Attention focuses typically on the bricks and mortar output of the housing project. In addition, research into the human gains in terms of self-worth, self-actualization, community esteem and pride of ownership is being undertaken. In many ways, these self-worth, self-actualization gains are the real long-run payoffs of the Self-Help Housing concept.

The study in Colorado is intended to determine the socio-economic impacts upon individuals and communities participating in the program. Beneficiaries of Title V assistance include current participants in the Morgan County program and the Colorado Rural Housing Development Corporation. Local officials and citizens in other parts of the state will be given information about this alternative for meeting housing needs. A team approach is utilized in this project in which members perform both research and extension functions.

Quality of Government Processes and Services

With the exception of California, every state's Title V plan of work in the Western Region includes a project oriented specifically toward strengthening local government operations and inter-governmental collaboration. Emphasis ranges from facilitating coordination among federal, state, and local agencies, and jurisdictions to helping local government officials in the preparation of grant proposals to fund local development activities.

Washington's total Title V effort is devoted to facilitating inter-

action among representatives of local, state, and federal governments. The purpose is to increase effectiveness in meeting rural development needs in a six county area of northeastern Washington. Research efforts determine development needs recognized by local people; the goals and plans of local government officials; the inter-agency relations and accomplishments as perceived by federal, state, regional, and county agencies. Baseline research data are being used in a series of seminars and workshops for the above representatives to emphasize community decision making processes. Documentation of these activities reveals that communities and groups of people concerned about development in the six county area have increased their knowledge, understanding, and skills in dealing with community concerns. Leadership for the research and extension functions is centered in a single program leader.

Nevada's Title V program seeks to define a procedure for developing a data base for community decision makers and to demonstrate how information about the community, its population and available resources can be used in community decision making. A resource atlas is being prepared for use by city councils, citizen advisory groups, and county government officials. In order to make this information useful, the Title V representative provides public officials help, increasing their understanding of ways to use the atlas in their decision making processes.

A Montana Title V project assists the Economic Development Association of eastern Montana—an 18 county area confronted with emerging energy resource development issues. This project proposes to strengthen the Association's capability to serve as a mechanism for planning and implementing area wide programs to provide more comprehensive, effective,

and higher quality public services. Project personnel work with local units of government in the area to increase their awareness and understanding of potentials for inter-governmental collaboration. Thus, beneficiaries include the regional organization and local units of government.

In New Mexico, Title V efforts concentrate on improving the viability of selected rural communities. To this end, technical assistance is provided to on-going community development projects. Needed planning, feasibility, and case studies are conducted for the three communities selected. Activities are designed to strengthen local government entities in their attempts to deal with community established priorities of needs. Project personnel work closely with city councils, special citizen committees and federal, state, and regional government agencies. Examples of support include technical assistance for grant applications to federal and state agencies for development of an industrial park, improvement in water and sewer systems, construction of recreational facilities, and home construction and improvement. In one of the selected communities, which currently is unincorporated, project personnel are helping residents determine the best form of organization for establishing a local government. In sum, local government oranizations of the three communities involved are experiencing increased popular support. Title V program staff share responsibility for both the research and the extension functions.

Conclusion

The above examples illustrate the range of Title V projects in the western states. An important common component is the direct involvement of local citizens and their elected officials in development and implementation of Title V programs. This involvement demonstrates the commitment and the ability of land grant institutions to work effectively on concerns and priorities identified by people residing in rural communities.

The contribution of land grant university extension and research systems to the development of rural areas relates to the "infrastructure" or "overhead" which a community requires to generate its own problem solving capacities. Problems must be identified and articulated, solutions created and appropriate actions taken. Local citizens must be involved or participating in these activities in meaningful ways. Information not available to local officials and citizens must be discovered and integrated into community development decision making processes. As this report demonstrates, these are the needs which the land grant system can help communities meet. It is the business of communities to build houses, sewer and water systems and hospitals; to determine land use allocations; and decide proper action on public issues. It is the business of land grant universities to make it possible for these things to be done effectively and efficiently within the capacities of the local community. Ideally, these actions occur in such a manner that local citizens can support and enjoy them. Thus a cooperative endeavor is imperative to the marshalling of resources sufficient to make a real difference in the lives and opportunities of persons living in the sparsely populated areas of the West.